

2020
ANNUAL
REPORT
FARMERS MARKET
FEDERATION OF
NEW YORK



TOUGHER
STRONGER
KINDER
SMARTER
BETTER
GREATER

Together



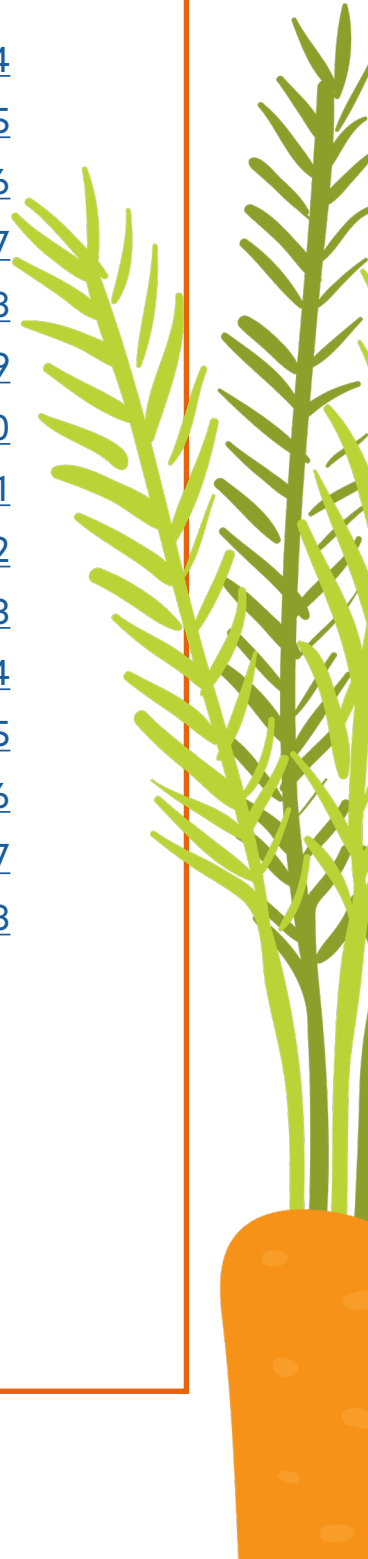
IF EVERYONE IS MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER,
THEN SUCCESS TAKES CARE OF ITSELF.

Henry Ford



TABLE *of* CONTENTS

Letter From the President.....	Page 4
Letter From the Executive Director.....	Page 5
SNAP at NY Farmers Markets.....	Page 6
SNAP Promotions.....	Page 7
Nutrition Programs.....	Page 8
Give Back NY.....	Page 9
NYS Market Managers Conference.....	Page 10
SARE Toolkit and Webinar Series.....	Page 11
Zoom Workshop Series.....	Page 12
FMM PRO Certification.....	Page 13
The Federation’s Growth in 2020.....	Page 14
2020 Financials.....	Page 15
Federation Team.....	Page 16
Our Partners and Collaborators.....	Page 17
Thank You.....	Page 18



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Many times, throughout this year I have been reminded of how proud I am to be a part of the Farmers Market Federation of NY. First was the March 2020 annual conference, when so many astute market managers shared best practices for high quality farmers markets that exceed customer expectations.

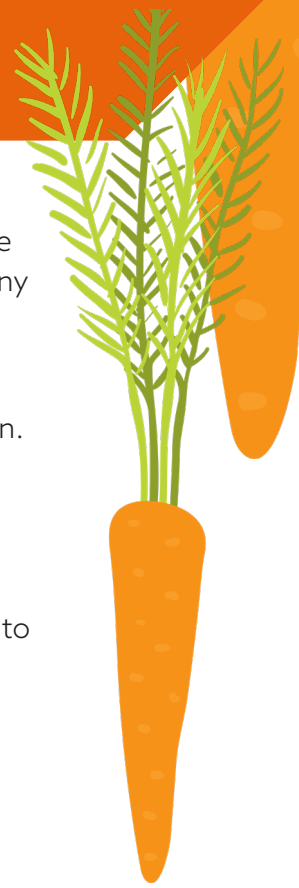
Then before we could take a deep breath, the Covid pandemic turned our world upside down. Amid huge uncertainties and anxieties, the Federation did not miss a beat – connecting managers through networking sessions, helping all of us figure out ways to maintain direct food sales from farmers and vendors to customers in innovative and safe ways. Taking part in these sessions that featured creative market leaders, I felt the connection that draws us together – as we gained ideas, shared frustrations, and recognized out-of-the-box solutions to moving ahead as essential businesses in our communities.

While continuing to provide critical pandemic related information and resources, Federation staff moved smoothly ahead with their planned portfolio of trainings and resources, which were re-imagined to be offered safely under pandemic guidelines. Efforts continued to support and expand SNAP, continued partnering with the NY Dept of Ag. & Markets on Nutrition Programs and coupon redemption, plus a new effort to partner markets with food pantries, soliciting community giving to support those in need.

Just as farmers markets are essential to our communities, the Farmers Market Federation is essential to nurturing and enhancing the health of our farmers markets throughout the state. I know you will be impressed with all that the Federation has carried out this year, as documented in this annual report.

Sincerely, *Margaret O'Neill*

TOGETHER, WE ARE *Responsive*
AND *Ready* FOR ANYTHING



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The year 2020 can be summed up in a single word: COVID-19. The pandemic has impacted every bit of our lives, including farmers markets. When New York went into lockdown in March, many year-round farmers markets were in operation. These markets had to quickly shift operations to keep customers and farmers safe from COVID-19. This all happened before even New York State or the Farmers Market Federation of New York could issue guidelines.

These farmers markets didn't miss a beat. Customers were able to continue purchasing fresh, healthy, and local food while farmers were empowered to sell their products, generating the income needed to support their farms and families.

It became clear to all that yes, Farmers Markets are Essential. New York State also saw the benefits and noted the safeguards at farmers markets. The State allowed farmers markets to stay open throughout the pandemic when other businesses had to shut down.

The Federation was required to close the office by mid-March. Staff packed up their computers, gathered essential documents and began working from home. However, we kept in communication with NYS Ag & Markets as well as market managers across the state. Together, we gathered information; shared best practices, concerns, and ideas; and helped our winter markets thrive while assisting seasonal markets as they prepared to open in May and June.

Once the Federation reopened in mid-May, we worked even harder to help markets comply with state-mandated COVID-19 guidelines. We partnered with 29 Design Studios, an agricultural marketing firm in the Finger Lakes to develop COVID-19 signage reminding all to mask up, wash hands, and stay distanced. The signage was available online and printed pieces were mailed to markets.

The Federation also hosted a number of Zoom networking sessions to help markets share their experiences and gain insight from one another as they shifted operations to comply with COVID-19 guidelines and consumer/farmer needs. Each session revolved around a central issue, with guest speakers on each topic. Overall, the networking sessions were well attended with upwards of 80 participants per session. The sessions were especially helpful to those who had not yet opened their markets for the season, as they gained knowledge from those with experience.

Today, we are preparing to open 2021 farmers markets under COVID-19 guidelines that could change at any time. After overcoming the challenges of 2020, we are confident that farmers markets and farmers will continue supporting their communities, adapting operations as needed, and ensuring that nothing gets in the way of bringing fresh, local food to customers.

Sincerely, *Diane Eggert*

TOGETHER, WE ARE

Essential



SNAP AT NY FARMERS MARKETS

One of the key impacts of COVID-19 is a renewed call to support local food and agriculture. Farmers markets, being held outdoors and upholding COVID-19 guidelines, were perceived as a much safer option for food shopping than big box stores with recirculated air in a closed environment. People also renewed their faith in the importance of supporting a local food system. Over the 2020 season, many markets and their farmers noted an increase in sales over prior years. SNAP sales were also up in 2020. SNAP customers found that shopping at farmers markets was safer, food was healthier, and the freshness led to a longer shelf life.

In addition to the increased recognition of the value of shopping at farmers markets, the Federal government increased SNAP allotments by 15% through Pandemic EBT. Markets and farmers accepting SNAP were able to accept P-EBT, as well.

In response to the pandemic, many farmers markets and farmers stepped up and became authorized to accept SNAP. Seven new farmers markets were added to the SNAP program. Farmers also answered the call to increase access to healthy food for consumers. An additional 10 farmers participated in the SNAP program, at farmers markets along with their farm stands, CSA and delivery programs.

	2020	2019	RATE OF CHANGE
FARMERS MARKETS	\$2,932,748.37	\$2,226,221.30	32%
MOBILE MARKETS	\$69,554.84	\$20,244.26	243%
FARMERS/CSAS	\$229,260.71	\$108,875.17	111%

WORKING TOGETHER,
THINGS *SNAP* INTO PLACE



SNAP PROMOTIONS

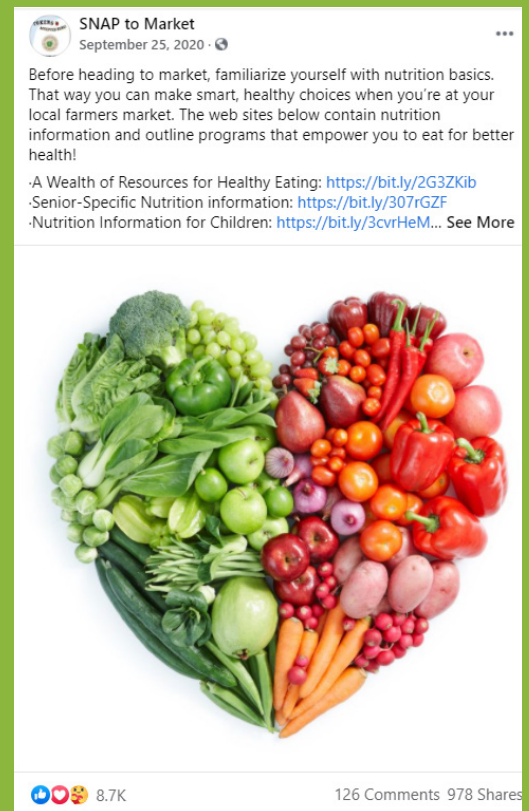
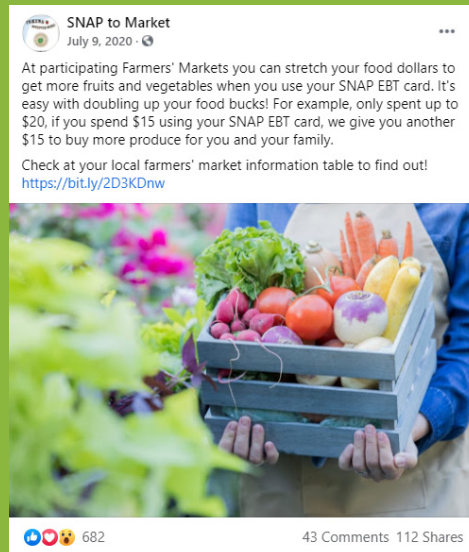


To encourage consumers to use their SNAP and P-EBT benefits at farmers markets, the Federation embarked on a season-long social media campaign with at least one post per week on the SNAP to Market Facebook page.

Posts promoted the safety of shopping at farmers markets during a pandemic, identified seasonal produce and accompanying recipes, and highlighted the state's farmers markets that accept SNAP benefits.

Each of the Facebook posts encouraged conversation by followers. In fact, each post garnered as much as 150 comments and thousands of likes.

With over 27,000 followers, the SNAP to Market Facebook page reaches tens of thousands of consumers with each post, while driving engagement.



NUTRITION PROGRAMS

During the pandemic, nutrition programs became more important than ever as a way to ensure everyone had enough food and to help support farmers. However, distribution of benefits was challenging as many agencies that distribute these benefits were operating under severe restrictions. In some cases clinics and agencies were not operating their offices as many employees were working from home. In other cases, visits to clients were virtual so benefits could not be hand delivered. In addition, face-to-face workshops and cooking demonstrations were cancelled or held virtually limiting distribution of benefits, among other challenges that were a direct result of COVID-19.

However, nutrition programs empowered customers to shop at farmers markets by increasing their buying power. It was an important revenue source for participating farmers across the state.

While the Federation has worked with funders to redeem incentive coupons for farmers, 2020 was the first year working with the Farmers Market Nutrition Program. Once redeemed through Key Bank, the program transitioned to the Federation when Key Bank chose to discontinue its contract with NYSDAM. The Farmers Market Federation of NY stepped up to ensure this important nutrition program was able to continue providing incentives to consumers to shop at markets for local food and to provide a revenue source for the state's direct marketing farmers

<i>Program</i>	<i>Funder</i>	<i>2020 Redemptions</i>	<i>2019 Redemptions</i>	<i>Percentage Change</i>
FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM	NYS AG & MARKETS	798,355	1,249,569 ¹	-36%
NYC HEALTH BUCKS	NYC DEPT OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE	546,278	489667	12%
FRESHCONNECT CHECKS	NYS AG & MARKETS	217,046	230,649	-5.9%
CNY HEALTH BUCKS	FOOD BANK OF CNY	5868	8105	-28% ²

¹Data derived from NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, to provide comparison data for 2020.

²Coupon distribution is through participation in on-site market cooking demos and partnering agencies of the Food Bank of CNY. During the pandemic, onsite cooking demonstrations were held virtually. Also, some partnering agencies chose to limit consumer contact due to COVID-19.



CELEBRATING FARMERS MARKETS: GIVE BACK NY

The pandemic led to widespread concern that everyone had enough to eat. Many people were out of work due to the statewide shutdown of all non-essential businesses. New York developed a program, titled Nourish NY, that provide widespread food distributions through food banks.

Because the community at large was so supportive of farmers markets during the pandemic, the Federation chose to create a similar program called Give Back NY, also timed to celebrate National Farmers Market Week, August 2 - 8. This project coupled local food pantries with farmers markets. With guidance from the Food Bank of Central NY, The Federation developed a tool kit that included:

- General description of Give Back NY and the expectations of the program
- Statewide list of community level food pantries and emergency food programs
- Instructions for markets to contact local food pantries to partner for Farmers Market Week
- Tips for food pantries and emergency food programs to participate in farmers markets
- Promotional pieces for onsite signage and social media

Press releases announced the program and encouraged the community to visit their local farmers markets during National Farmers Market Week and donate to their local food pantry. Donations could be food products purchased from market farmers and vendors, cash or products brought from home such as canned goods and other pre-packaged foods.

A total of 85 farmers markets participated in Give Back NY and up to 75 food pantries and emergency feeding programs participated in partnership with their local farmers market. Overall, the results showed a great turnout for markets and partner pantries. One food pantry indicated they received 350 pounds of food donations through Give Back NY and hoped that they will be able to continue partnering with their farmers market. Another market raised over \$2800 in donations for their local food pantry, with donations ranging from \$5 up to an anonymous donor of \$1000! Overall, Give Back NY was the perfect way to show appreciation for farmers markets; bringing the community into markets, creating partnerships with community organizations and expressing gratitude for the work of those helping to feed us all - farmers and food pantries.



Give Back NY
FARMERS MARKET WEEK, AUGUST 2-8, 2020

WHY SHOP AT A FARMERS MARKET?

- FIND NUTRIENT-RICH, FLAVORFUL FOOD PICKED AT PEAK RIPENESS**
- SHOP IN AN OPEN-AIR, SAFE ENVIRONMENT**
- ALL-LOCAL MEANS FRESHER FOOD THAT LASTS LONGER IN YOUR HOME**
- SUPPORTS LOCAL AGRICULTURE AND SMALL FAMILY FARMERS**



2020 NYS MARKET MANAGERS CONFERENCE

The 2020 farmers market managers conference ran without a hitch in Kingston, March 3 -4. How fortunate we were! Attendees were keenly aware of COVID-19 but did not imagine that it would turn into a life-altering event within just a few days of the conference. Within just a two week time frame, the state was in virtual lockdown and all other conferences in the region were cancelled or transformed to a virtual platform.

The conference featured a number of informative sessions. But two sessions rose to the top, according to conference evaluations. The networking session that grouped attendees by region to discuss common issues and ideas, was considered by many to be the highlight of the conference. In fact, when the time for the session to conclude came up, attendees continued on with their discussions! The other highlighted session, per evaluations, was the session that offered a view of farmers markets from the vendors perspective. It is always helpful to hear about your market from a different vantage point.

The conference attendance was within the usual range of 75 - 85 attendees. But most noticeable were the number of "new" attendees. Farmers Market managers attending the conference for the first time and coming away with a slew of ideas to implement in their efforts to grow their markets.

TOGETHER, WE ARE *Resourceful*

The last "maskless"
Federation event...
before COVID-19.



SARE TOOLKIT AND WEBINAR SERIES

The Federation hosted a number of online presentations to discuss the Toolkit for Adapting Farmers Markets to Match Consumer Trends, a project funded by NE SARE and co-partnered with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County. The project started in 2018 with a consumer survey to assess consumer attitudes towards farmers markets. The survey resulted in 10 key observations:

1. Local food is valued by all consumer groups
2. Convenience is king
3. Customer service matters
4. Perception remains that markets are expensive
5. Pricing should always be displayed
6. Demand for diversity of items and amount of vendors
7. Farmer/customer relationships are NOT motivating for all consumers
8. Many are intimidated shopping direct with farmers
9. Belief that markets should be environmental stewards
10. Customers want to feel like VIPs and have a pleasant experience

From these observations, a toolkit was developed to assist markets to alter their market's policies, practices and programs. The goal was to distribute the toolkit to farmers markets across the state and with our state partners: Vermont, Massachusetts and Maryland; and with any other interested market nationwide. To support the toolkit, we conducted a series of webinars on each of the key points. This series started in early 2020 with the goal of providing information and time for markets to implement new programs and practices for the 2020 season.

- February 12: Identifying & Marketing to Your Target Customer
- February 21: Branding and Marketing Basics
- March 10: The 3 P's of Farmers Markets
- March 30: Market Programs and Services That Draw Customers
- April 7: From the Farmers Perspective

Unfortunately, with COVID-19, came new operation guidelines that restricted markets from testing new concepts presented in the Toolkit and webinar series, and measuring impacts on sales and attendance. Therefore, we needed to reimagine the project, which has an end date of March 30, 2021. After consultations with NE SARE, we adapted our project goal to be adapting markets for post-COVID. With that goal in mind, we created another webinar series for Winter 2020/2021. The webinars go into depth on many of the principles and programs found in the Toolkit. Rather than using project partners as presenters, we used presenters who were currently using the concepts found in the Toolkit. The new series, began in November 2020 and extended into early 2021.

- November 10: Marketing Strategies for Outreach
- December 3: Programs to Build Customers and Add Sales
- December 15: Identifying and Reaching Unique Customers
- January 12: Marketing Integrity: Meeting Customer Expectations
- January 26: Lessons from the Field
- February 10: Identifying and Overcoming Customer Obstacles



ZOOM WORKSHOP SERIES

The pandemic meant a lot of Zoom meetings for everyone and that included the Farmers Market Federation of NY! We held several workshops and forums via Zoom. We started the market season with a series of open forums for market managers, discussing operating markets during COVID-19:

- April 2: First open forum
- April 9: Featuring Barryville Market regarding pre-packed bags and curbside pickup
- April 16: Crowd control
- April 23: Online sales platforms
- April 30: Opening spring markets and new safety guidelines
- May 21: How markets are dealing with resistance to guidelines
- June 11: Farmers market reopening safety plans
- June 25: NY forward phase openings (managing guidelines)
- July 23: Face masks are mandatory
- August 13: Defusing hostile situations at your market
- August 24: Farm safety planning
- September 3: Planning for winter markets

We also hosted many virtual trainings for the SNAP program: The first series covered enrolling in SNAP and the second covered operating SNAP at farmers markets using a central terminal system. The sessions were repeated several times to maximize attendance and were recorded and hosting on the Federation website for future viewing: <https://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/snap-for-farmers-markets>.

WE GET TO THE *Root Issues* TOGETHER



FMM PRO CERTIFICATION

The year 2020 saw the new launch of the Farmers Market Managers Professional Certification Program (FMM Pro) on a new online platform: Teachable. This platform is more user friendly for FMM Pro students. The revitalized FMM Pro launched on early March 2020. With the pandemic, we did not go into a widespread promotion of FMM Pro as we knew market managers would be overwhelmed with adapting their markets to state COVID guidelines and dealing with the increased workload caused by maintaining crowd control, assuring masks were worn, sanitizing the market, and keeping their staff, farmers and vendors, and their customers safe from the virus. However, we still saw 9 new enrollees in FMM Pro in 2020, including one market manager who secured their Certificate of Achievement.

The year 2020 also brought about a new twist for FMM Pro. Recognizing that some people respond best by in person learning, a new face to face learning platform was established, with support from NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. The program was to condense the curriculum into 6 - 7 sessions that would be held in a classroom with live speakers, group discussions and activities to highlight the lessons learned each session. The plan was to pilot this effort in the Southern Tier region and then move to new areas within the state each successive year.

However, COVID-19 changed our plans. So we moved to Zoom sessions and eliminated the group activities to something that could be done on screen. With a great deal of scrambling, the curriculum was set for 6 sessions, each covering 2-3 modules of the full FMM Pro course, and speakers uniquely qualified to speak on the topics were identified and engaged. Finally, we were able to recruit 12 market managers to join the new FMM Pro Face-to-Face Learning program via Zoom. Classes began in January 2021 and conclude by the end of March.

TOGETHER, WE
BUILD UP OUR
Skill Set



THE FEDERATION'S GROWTH IN 2020

In 2019, the Federation Board of Directors approved the hiring of an Assistant Director. This position was created to round out the succession plan for the Executive Director's position, knowing that the current Director is approaching retirement age. The Assistant Director would be in place well in advance of any retirement and would be able to learn all aspects of the Federation's programs and services, allow for the transfer of institutional knowledge and have time to build relationships with market managers, organizational partners, supporters and funders.

After an extensive search, Beth Seeley was hired to fill the position. Beth is a dietician and worked with the Food Bank of CNY on their CNY Health Bucks program. She conducted nutrition education classes at farmers markets through the Central New York region. In this position, she came to know farmers markets as well as the Farmers Market Federation of NY.

Beth was to begin working with the Federation in early March and came to the NYS Farmers Market Managers Conference in Kingston prior to her start date, to get to know managers and be a part of the conference. She was to begin work shortly after, but once again, COVID-19 interfered. The Federation offices were closed as non-essential businesses throughout the state were closed. How to do you bring in a new employee, in a newly created position and do the appropriate training while in lock down? But after only a week's delay to set up a training program, Beth started working for the Federation on March 25. Training was done through a series of emailing of organizational documents, phone discussions and ultimately zoom sessions. Fortunately Beth was dedicated and quickly earned her place in the organization.

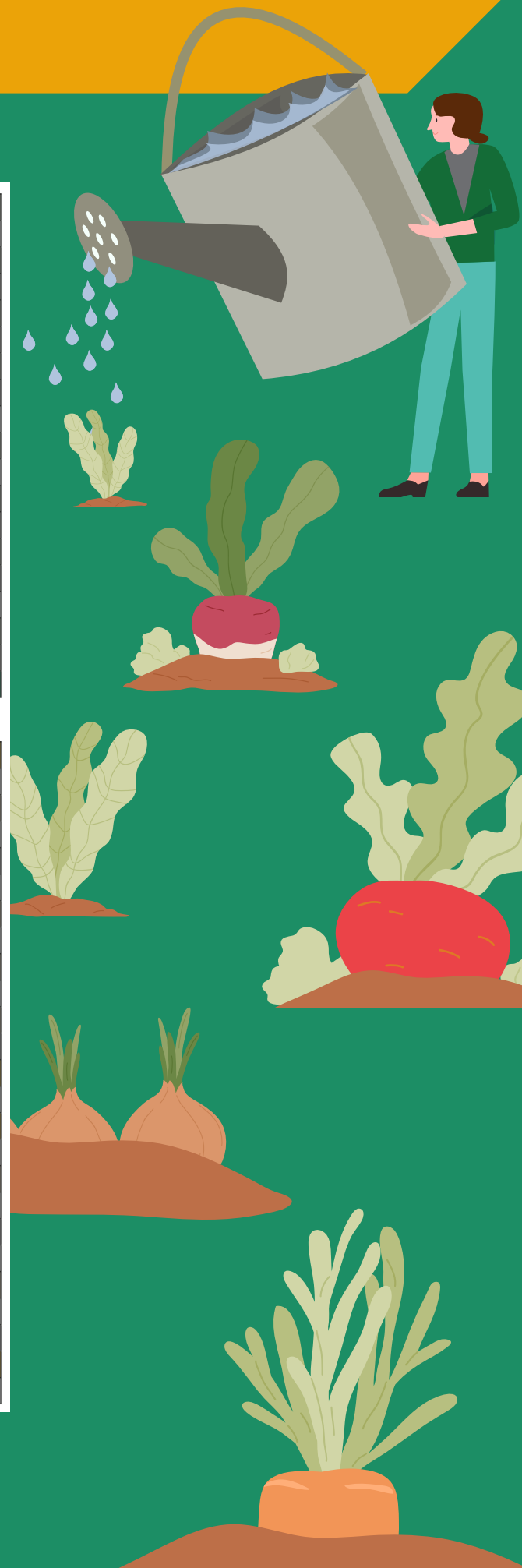
Since Beth joined the Federation she has been busy working on a number of projects. Beth set up and facilitated the market managers networking forums held for COVID operations. She also has taken the lead in organizing the upcoming 2021 NYS Virtual Farmers Market Managers Conference. She was instrumental in the Give Back NY Farmers Market week celebration and organized a fundraiser, our Virtual Barn Dance in November. For Beth, working for the Federation has been a real "Trial by Fire"!

Once we can open our markets back to normal, you will find Beth visiting farmers markets to meet you all and learn more about your farmers market.

TOGETHER WE ALWAYS
Grow Stronger



2020 FINANCIALS



ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$529,866
Cash - Exchange FMNP	\$1,402,000
Investments	\$388,009
Accounts Receivable	\$252,774
Prepaid Expenses	\$900
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,573,549

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	
Accrued Expenses	\$14,826
Funds Held for FMNP Grant	\$1,402,000
Deferred Revenue	\$97,356
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$1,514,182

NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	\$1,059,367
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$2,573,549

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	
Support:	
Contributions and Sponsor	\$1,226
Membership	\$503
TOTAL SUPPORT	\$1,729
Revenue:	
Government grants	\$252,834
Coupon Service Fees	\$118,998
Program Fees	\$13,737
Interest	\$5,599
Gain on Investments	(\$1,750)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$391,147
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$446,654

EXPENSES	
Program Expenses:	
Wireless Technology	\$142,774
Training	\$115,061
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$257,835
Supporting Services:	
Management and General	\$58,771
Fundraising	\$1,696
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	\$60,467
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$318,302
<i>Net Change in Assets</i>	<i>\$72,845</i>

THE FEDERATION TEAM

Board Members

Metro Region

Jessica Douglas
GrowNYC

Melinda Meddaugh, Secretary
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Sullivan County

Northern Region

Julie Baughn
Plattsburgh Farmers & Crafters Market

Amanda Root
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Jefferson County

Central Region

Beth Irons, Vice President
Oneida County Public Market
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Oneida County

Laura Biasillo
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Broome County

Eastern Region

Steve Hadcock, Treasurer
Cornell Cooperative Extension
Capital Area Horticulture Program

Marissa Peck
Capital Roots

Western Region

Margaret O'Neill, Vice President
Friends of the Rochester Public Market

Jackie Farrell
Westside Farmers Market

Members At Large

Beth Bainbridge
Children's Aid Society

Taisy Conk
New Settlement's Community
Food Action

Chuck McFadden
Downtown Syracuse Farmers Market

Board Advisors

Mark McMullen
NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets

Lindsay Ott Wilcox
Centermost Marketing

Federation Staff

Executive Director
Diane Eggert

Assistant Director
Beth Seeley

Office Manager
Britni Gallo



OUR PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS



**Agriculture
and Markets**



Sustainable Agriculture
Research & Education



**NY farm viability
INSTITUTE**

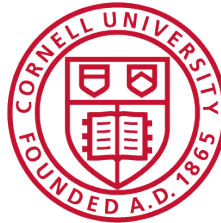


NAFMNP

National Association of
Farmer's Market Nutrition Programs



Fund for
Public Health NY



**Office of Temporary
and Disability Assistance**




Food Bank
of Central New York
WE WORK FOR FOOD.

napmm
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRODUCE MARKET MANAGERS

**FRESH CONNECT FARMERS
MARKETS PROGRAM**





THANK YOU FOR YOUR PART IN
MAKING THE BEST OF A VERY
CHALLENGING YEAR. WE GOT
THROUGH IT TOGETHER.

IN GRATITUDE,
*The Farmers Market
Federation of New York*